

**WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes – May 10, 2006**  
**Riehle Plaza/Depot, 250 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Lafayette, Indiana**

<b>Voting Members Present:</b> Allen County – Paul McAfee Carroll County – George Mears Cass County – Mercedes Brugh DNR – Steve Morris Fountain County – Connie Scheurich Huntington County – Mike Mettler Knox County – Shane Cooper Miami County – Ken Einselen Posey County – Ralph Weinzapfel Sullivan County – John Gettinger Tippecanoe County – Norman (Lucky) Neiburger Vermillion County – Mike Craig Vigo County – Keith Ruble (alternate) Wabash County – Ernest Passwater Warren County – Louise Jewell	<b>Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy:</b> Gibson County Jay County Parke County  <b>Proxies</b> Wells County - Keith Huffman to Mike Mettler  <b>Non-Voting Members Present:</b>   <b>Non-Voting Members Not Present</b> IDEM INDOT DNR-DHPA Indiana Office of Tourism
<b>Commission and DNR Staff Present:</b> Ron James – WRHCC Executive Director Karen Hanes – DNR Outdoor Recreation	<b>Guests:</b> Stan Lambert – Wabash River Development Corporation Donna Romein – Carroll County

**CALL TO ORDER**

John Gettinger called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. John asked the members to introduce themselves.

John introduced Wabash College representatives that were planning a Wabash River trip. Dan Rogalski explained that Wabash College put together a program with assistance from Lilly Endowment in which the college provides an opportunity for students at the college to put together a self-directed research project. The students, a scientist, a historian and an artist are looking forward to the experience. Students Homer Twigg and Zach Webb explained the project in further detail to commission and asked for ideas and/or suggestions that could help them on their journey down the river. Several commission members offered suggestions and possible assistance with their endeavor.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE March 8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING MINUTES**

John asked for approval of the March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Mercedes Brugh made a motion to approve the minutes. Paul McAfee seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

John Gettinger reported that he and Ralph Weinzapfel have been attending the meetings of the New Harmony Paddlefest which is in August. The Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission logo is on all of the literature. Last year’s event had approximately 300 people in attendance and they expect even more this year. John also reported he has been trying to organize Wabash River interest groups in every county. The effort in Sullivan County is moving forward.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ron James stated the only addition to the Executive Director's Report that was attached to the minutes would be to list out the correspondence sent and received to the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission. At the Watershed Leadership Academy, Ron was selected to give a presentation on the persuasive presentation of environmental improvements. Ron is currently arranging county Board of Commissioner presentations. During the past 60 days Ron has presented updates to the Commissioners of Parke and Allen Counties and a visit has been planned for Wabash County. Ron asked the members to contact their county commissioners to assist him in getting on each county's agenda.

## **FINANCE REPORT (see attached)**

Steve Morris distributed the finance report to the commission members showing expenses that have or will be submitted and the balances. Steve also noted that travel checks were delayed due to paperwork slow coming in from the County Commissioners and also the transition in DNR to the new Peoplesoft Program. Steve reported that he has re-ordered a printer the commission approved at the last meeting. Mercedes Brugh asked about the commission's membership to the Little Turtle Waterway. Steve stated he has not received the invoice for the membership. The commission has about \$7,000 remaining in this budget that could be utilized before the fiscal year ends.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Water Trail**

The committee is currently working with the Huntington County GIS Manager, Mike Snelling, to develop the maps. Map # 2 is complete which includes Huntington, Wells and Allen County. Map #7 for Vigo and Sullivan Counties is complete and Tippecanoe County, Map # 5, will be next. Dale Brier of DNR – Outdoor Recreation created the front and back page of the brochure for the commission. What the committee intends to do is contact the Commission's representative for each county's map under development to let them look at the map and make any changes or additions. Mr. Snelling will be coming to the commission meeting in July in Huntington. The project involves 9 river maps and an overall key map. Central Printing or PEN Products will be able to print these maps.

### **Wabash River Documentary**

Ron James reported he paid \$1.65 each and purchased 300 DVDs. This is enough to provide a copy to each state and federal legislator and will leave 100 DVDs remaining. Representative Klinker suggested the commission check with DNR Director, Kyle Hupfer before doing the mailing. Steve Morris suggested that Ron James provide Kyle Hupfer with a copy of the mailing for review.

### **Education Teach the River Symposium**

John Gettinger reported they are working on the idea of having an art competition aimed at getting people to draw pictures of the river and things in river communities. The first one will be held in Sullivan County. Local organizations will supply prizes for the drawings.

### **River Rally Indiana**

Mike Mettler reported he attended an Indiana River Rally planning meeting with a coalition of different groups. The group has targeted the event for 2007 in Lafayette. The next planning meeting will be held on June 5 at Fort Benjamin Harrison State Park.

### **Legislative Committee**

Mercedes Brugh distributed legislative information packets for the commission members so they can talk to legislators about the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission. Members were encouraged to meet with legislators before the WRHCC meeting in July.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **National Heritage Area Study**

Ron James reported he sent a letter, as composed at the last meeting, to Representatives Souder and Chocoma and sent an 'fyi' letter to all other Indiana Representatives, Senators Lugar and Bayh.

### **Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy**

Ron stated had a very lengthy face to face session. They spent about 2 days in Lafayette discussing several subjects including GIS.

### **River Rally (River Network), May 5-9, 2006 in New Hampshire**

Mike Mettler reported he went to New Hampshire this year to represent the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission at the National River Rally. There were 35 different educational sessions. Paul McAfee made a motion to have the commission send and sponsor a commission member to the River Rally next year. Ernie Passwater seconded the motion and it carried.

### **River Odyssey: Two Artists Follow the Wabash**

Ron James stated he attended the opening of the River Odyssey, which was held on March 24 at the Indiana State Museum. The display closes in Indianapolis on June 25 and re-opens in New Harmony and Vincennes in July. The Commission discussed ways to recognize and honor the artists. Steve Morris made a motion to table the discussion until the July meeting so more information can be obtained regarding the Sycamore of the Wabash Award. Connie Scheurich seconded the motion and it carried.

### **De-Trash the Wabash – Tippecanoe/Calendar status**

De-Trash the Wabash was held on May 20<sup>th</sup> in Tippecanoe County. Ron James noted that the Banks group has De-Trash equipment available to help sponsor De-Trash the Wabash events in other counties.

### **Banks of the Wabash Brochure & Membership Drive**

John Gettinger reported he is hopeful they will be successful forming a county chapter of Banks of the Wabash in Sullivan County. There has been a lot of interest, with several people attending the exploratory meetings. They are looking to add 25 members.

### **Water Trail Signage**

Ron James stated he had 3 more agreements for installing water trail signs: Miami County Board of Commissioners, Vincennes and the City of Mount Carmel, Illinois. By August, Ron should have half the access points in Illinois signed up. All of the grand opening events are listed on the WRHCC website. Eight or nine counties have set their events, which is half of the counties along the Wabash. Ron reminded the commission members to invite the Governor, Lieut. Governor, DNR Director Kyle Hupfer and state legislators as well as the media. Steve Morris noted that events scheduled within a week of National Trails Day (6/3) should be reported to the American Hiking Society for listing on their website.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Final Purchase Authorizations for 2005-2006 Budget**

John Gettinger stated the commission has about \$6,000 left for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005.

Steve Morris suggested one of the purchases the commission may consider is to extend the deadline of March 31, 2006 for promoting Water Trail Grand Opening events. Steve reminded the board of the necessary paperwork (Invoice, W-9 and Direct Deposit form) required for purchases. Connie Scheurich

made a motion to suspend the cut-off date for promotional costs for Grand Opening events. Norman (Lucky) Neiburger seconded the motion and it carried.

Mercedes Brugh suggested the commission purchase additional water trail signs keeping the cost at \$500 or under. Connie Scheurich seconded the motion. And it carried.

Mercedes Brugh made a motion to purchase \$500 worth of posts, and bolts for the signs. Norman (Lucky) Neiburger seconded the motion and it carried.

Paul McAfee made a motion to purchase \$500 worth of water trail map display boxes. Keith Ruble seconded the motion and it carried.

Mercedes Brugh stated the Little Turtle Waterway is putting together a teaching guide geared toward third and fourth grade students. This book can be printed at 100 for \$1,000. John Gettinger asked, if the commission donated \$500, could the WRHCC logo be put on the book. Mercedes believed so. Norman (Lucky) Neiburger made a motion to donate the \$500. Paul McAfee seconded the motion and it carried.

Ron James proposed the idea of sharing the Lafayette WRHCC Office with the Hoosier Environmental Council. He also suggested adding a phone/DSL/fax line added to the Lafayette Office that it currently does not have. Steve Morris noted this would require landlord approval. Norman (Lucky) Neiburger made a motion to get estimates to add the phone/fax/DSL line to the Lafayette Office and if the cost is less than \$40 per month and installation is reasonable, have the line(s) installed. Mercedes Brugh seconded the motion and it carried.

Connie Scheurich suggested the commission purchase embroidered shirts with the WRHCC logo on them keeping the cost at \$500. John Gettinger suggested having the WRHCC logo converted for embroidery purposes. Connie Scheurich made a motion to purchase embroidery pattern layout of the WRHCC logo. Norman (Lucky) Neiburger seconded the motion. And it carried.

### **Select County Representatives to write articles for next *Reflections***

Fountain (Connie Scheurich), Posey (Ralph Weinzapfel), and Miami Counties (Ken Einselen) will submit articles for the *Reflections*.

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Steve Morris reported DNR has been charged with developing a new statewide trails plan. Trails planning summit is planned for May 31 in Indianapolis.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

The next meeting will be held July 12, 2006, in Huntington, Indiana.